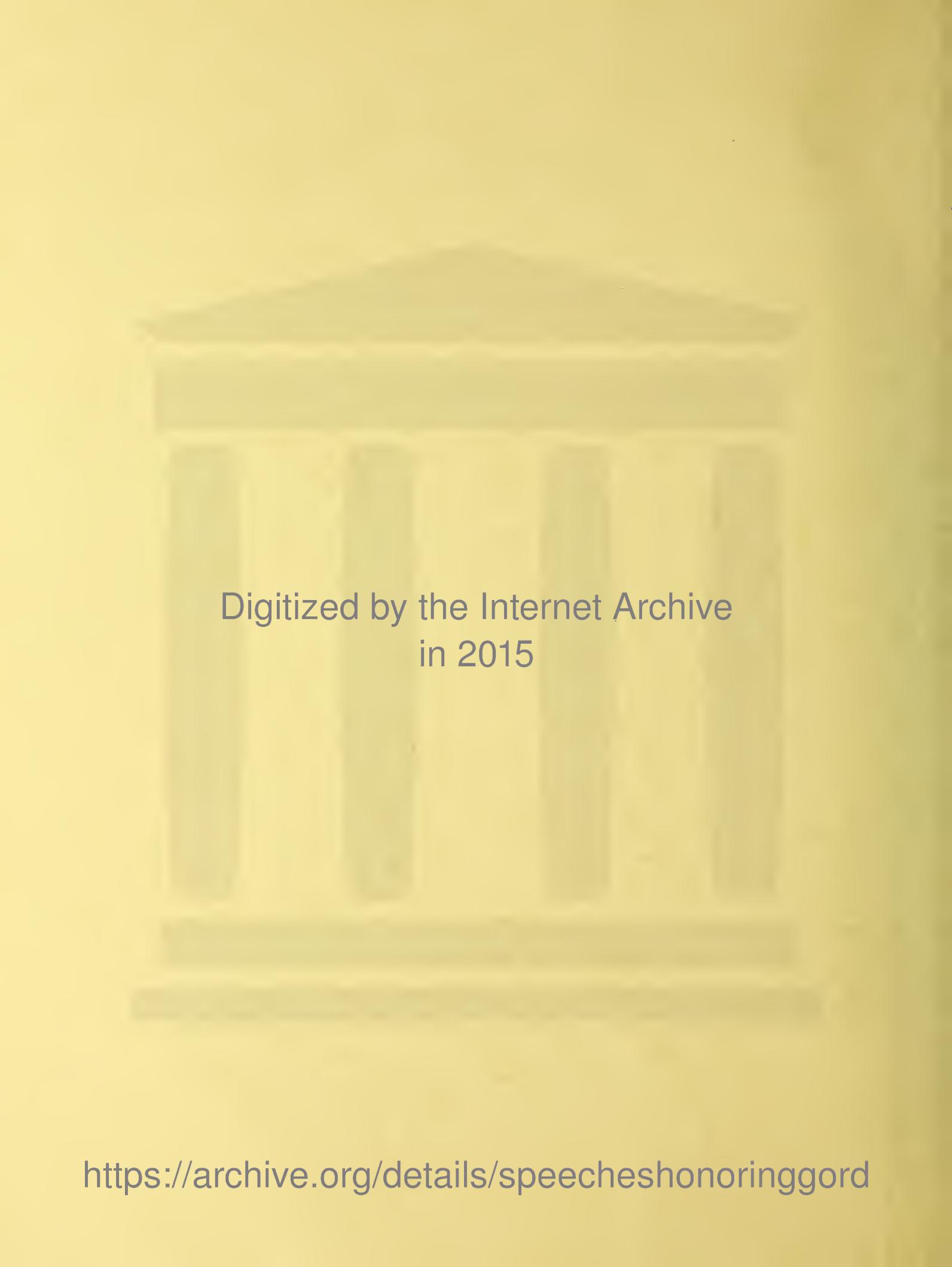


GORDON F. - JR.

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Speeches Honoring Abraham Lincoln

R.L. Gordon, Jr.

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection
(formerly referenced as Manuscript Files)

Mr. Speaker and Fellow members of the Legislature,
In Support of the resolution just read from the Clerk's desk
permit me to say that I trust the Virginia Legislature, when
it adjourns today will do so in honor of the martyred President,
of the United States, Abraham Lincoln.

I have been recently reading the debates between Judge Douglas and Mr. Lincoln upon the question of slavery in the United States. Judge Douglas was an orator an educated and cultured man, but in these debates he was totally overthrown and routed by Mr. Lincoln, who perhaps was the greatest and most incisive debater of his day, not only so but his declaration that, "No Nation could exist half slave and half free," is fundamentally true. He recognized in these discussions the right of the States to hold slaves under the Constitution, he did not propose to interfere with the Constitutional rights of any slaveholder, but he did lay down the principle that the Black Man had the right to eat the bread which he made with his own hands, a proposition which no Southern Gentleman will now dispute. Indeed, everyone now admits that the perpetuation of slavery would have been a National misfortune, and the South should be grateful to the people of the North not only for freeing the slaves but for freeing the white men also, and I firmly believe Mr. Speaker, that if this resolution is today adopted by this body it will be only a few years before the Legislature of Massachusetts will pass resolutions honoring the memories of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson and Jefferson Davis, so that the description of our Union given by Mr. Webster may be realized, "An indissoluble Union of Indestructible States."

R. L. Gordon.

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